

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Examiner's Office Action dated February 2, 2007, in which the Examiner rejected claims 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gammack(US 6835222 B1).

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 6 and 9 have been amended to clarify the subject matter of the present invention. Further, claims 10-16 have been added. Amended claims 6 and 9 are supported by page 11 line 4 to page 13 line 10 in general and by page 11 lines 16-25, page 13 lines 5-7, and Fig 5 in particular. Further, claims 10-16 are supported by page 13 lines 4-10. Accordingly, all of the amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure of this application and therefore do not constitute the introduction of any new matter into this case and therefore meet the written description requirement of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112.

Rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gammack (US 6835222 B1):

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the grounds that the Gammack patent neither discloses nor suggests an electric vacuum cleaner, as recited in claim 6, in which a portion of the suction air stream is suctioned into the electric blower via the centrifugal separation member and the remaining portion of the suction air stream is suctioned into the electric blower via a communication aperture of the dirt separation member, i.e., in which the air stream is suctioned into the electric blower via at least **two inlets**, one of which is in the centrifugal separation member and the other of which is a communication aperture of the dirt separation member.

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In contrast, according to fig 1, 2a, 3a, and 4a of Gammack, particle-separation apparatus (10, 110, 210, 310) of Gammack has only **one inlet** (20, 120, 220, 320) and only one outlet (40, 140, 240, 340) connected to an electric blower (a vacuum source). Therefore, **the entirety of the suction air stream of Gammack is suctioned into the electric blower via the centrifugal separation member.**

Accordingly, the Gammack patent does not anticipate (or suggest) the invention defined in claim 6 and, therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gammack (US 6835222 B1):

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the grounds that the Gammack patent neither discloses nor suggests a vacuum cleaner in which, In accordance with claim 9, the air stream guide portion runs substantially **parallel to a flow direction of the suction air stream being introduced into the inlet port.** Instead, the air stream guide portion (the depending tube 322b) disclosed in Gammack runs substantially **normal to a flow direction of the suction air stream being introduced into the inlet port.** Therefore, the subject matter of claim 9 is not anticipated (or suggested) by the Gammack patent and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is also respectfully requested.

Newly added claims

Newly added claims 10-15 include limitations of previously presented claim 6 or 9. Because these newly added claims 10-15 depend on allowed claims 4, 7 or 8, they are also allowable.

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As to claim 16, Gammack fails to disclose, suggest or even imply a dirt separation member having a communication aperture provided at a *bottom* portion thereof, to be in communication with the electrical blower. Accordingly, claim 16 should also be allowable.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this is a full and complete response to the Office Action. For the reasons discussed above, applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in complete condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection be withdrawn; and that pending claims be allowed in their present form. If the Examiner feels that any issues that remain require discussion, he/she is kindly invited to contact applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve the issues.

In view of the above comments and amendments to the claims, favorable reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims now present in the application are most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Urcia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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